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A BROADER OUTLOOK FOR STUDENTS OF CICERO

All who have taught the classics are probably conscious that a portion, and no small portion, of the difficulty which the average student encounters in the early years of his pursuit of Latin and Greek, arises from the lack of familiarity with the thought of classical writers and with the civilization which gave color to their thought. The boy may painfully acquire the multitudinous forms, he may overcome by diligent effort the perplexity of new grammatical constructions, he may even familiarize himself with numerous strange words of the strange tongue—and still the difference between his own point of view and that of the writer may cause a mist hopelessly to obscure the thought. If we can in imagination put ourselves in the place of a young student who has never been far beyond the borders of the little town where he lives, whose knowledge of life is limited to what he sees and hears in that narrow environment, supplemented by the few books which he studies and the even fewer which he reads, then we can appreciate his need of help to understand the literature of the ancients.

In first-year Latin this difficulty is minimized by the character of the text put before the pupil. In the second year the Latin read is restricted in subject and somewhat picturesque, and considerable opportunity is offered, by the introductory matter in our Caesars, for becoming acquainted with the military dress and equipments of the common soldier, the construction of the camp, the siege works, the organization of the army.

By the time the third year is reached difficulties of the language have decreased and the student has acquired some facility in meeting them. But just here the thought becomes more abstruse, and the difficulty of comprehending the situation portrayed is increased many fold. Yet the need is imperative, for, as another has said, "It is impossible to read understandingly an ode of Horace or an oration of Cicero, if one is ignorant of the social life and the political institutions of Rome."

Without effort on the part of both pupil and teacher the boy will fail to comprehend the dread and apprehension of that famous eighth of November on which Cicero first turned the power of his oratory against Catiline. He will not see the dark and narrow streets of Rome, lighted at night only by a lantern here and there, which some enterprising Roman has hung above his door, or the occasional gleam of a torch which a servant bears in advance of a party of late revelers on their return homeward from some

antelucanae cenae. The boy will not feel that dread of fire at night which made the care to prevent conflagrations so important a part of the duties of *vigiliae* at all times, nor will he comprehend the special *timor populi* of those nights when rumors of the plans of the conspirators to burn the city were whispered about. Unaided he will not see the Palatine, just enough elevated to be a natural stronghold, a strategic situation, but under military guard only in time of danger. Nor will he see distinctly the senate, no longer "an assembly of kings" as in the days of old, but still made up of the wealth and social position and political success of the greatest nation then on the face of the earth. He will not be sure to notice that the senators are not in their usual place of meeting in the *curia*, but that Cicero, influenced partly by the nearness to his own house, has called them together in *hic munitissimus habendi senatus locus*, the temple of Jupiter Stator, the protector of the city.

If all these things are fully present to the boy's imagination, how much readier he is to enter upon the task of translation!

How best can we give our pupil the knowledge of these things, and how stimulate his imagination to grasp them? These two objects should be before us in dealing with the situation in this elementary stage, rather than any effort at formal discipline.

With some classes a good deal can be accomplished by calling attention to topics and suggesting that they be looked up. Usually I have found it best to cast to the winds all idea of task in connection with this study, to stimulate interest by saying something about topics in advance, to minimize the labor of the pupil by giving abundant specific references, and to have the recitations entirely voluntary—"little of the quiz, but interested conversation."

Occasionally topics may be assigned to the pupils severally as definite work, and a comprehensive effort within the range of their possibilities may be required. The young people may present to the class the results of their investigations in the form of oral reports from notes or of written papers, as they themselves choose. Dr. Prescott, of the University of California, says that there are many students in our classes to whom language work as such does not appeal, who yet can be interested on the literary side. He believes that Latin teachers' methods are adapted too exclusively to minds of the linguistic type, and that we should do more to interest and develop the others. To those pupils who shrink from work that is purely linguistic as drudgery, this study of antiquities will often prove a delight; and while all students enjoy making a supreme effort and doing the best of which they are capable not infrequently the one whose daily work is poor will

develop a surprising power in this new direction, be able to contribute largely to the success of the hour, and receive the stimulus which the sense of excellence gives.

Care should be exercised lest the practical needs of the pupil be sacrificed to the scholarly standards of the teacher. The aim should be undeviatingly to get before the pupil the most accurate and vivid picture of the situation as it appeared to a dweller at Rome in the autumn of the year 63 B. C. Accordingly, only the more picturesque of the concepts should be dwelt upon—those which illumine the text.

With this notion in mind, I recently read the first two Catilinarian orations and noted a number of such topics. Military subjects were omitted, with the thought that Caesar had afforded large opportunity for their study. Some of those selected would be ranked as private antiquities, some as public; part are institutional in character, part monumental; but all, if developed, would throw light upon Cicero's text:

Cat. I

Palati, 1.1	comitiis, 5.11	emori (suicide), 8.20
vigiliae, 1.1	campo, 5.11	abire (voluntary exile), 8.20
tabulis, 2.4	templa, 5.12	sacrarium, 9.24
coloniam, 3.8	nuptiis, 6.14	gladiatori, 12.29
falcarios, 4.8	servi, 7.17	tribunal, 13.32
domum, 4.8	custodiam, 8.19	curiam, 13.32
lectulo, 4.9	carcere, 8.19	

Cat. II

foro, 1.1	ludo gladiatorio, 5.9	subselliorum, 6.12
praetexta, 2.4	scena, 5.9	familia, 8.18
popina, 2.4	vino, 5.10	tabulas novas, 8.18
vadimonia, 3.5	alea, 5.10	sumptibus, 10.21
unguentis, 3.5	conviviis, 5.10	iudiciis, 11.21
purpura, 3.5	conferti cibo, 5.10	proscriptione bonorum, 10.21
Aurelia via, 4.6	sertis, 5.10	togis, 10.22
veneficus, 4.7	luxuria, 5.11	cenis, 10.22
sicarius, 4.7	exsiliium, 6.12	sicas et venena, 10.23
testamentorum, 4.7	aedem Iovis, 6.12	aerario, 11.25
ganeo, 4.7		

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